

**METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR DEFINING HARDWARE
ROUTING PATHS FOR NETWORKS HAVING
IP AND MPLS PATHS**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for defining hardware routing paths for networks having IP and MPLS paths generally comprises assigning a path ID for each path within a path group. The path ID for each path is an IP address and the path group contains all IP paths, all MPLS paths, or both IP and MPLS paths. The path ID for each MPLS path is a unique IP multicast address. The method further includes comparing all path IDs in each path group and assigning a common hardware resource to groups having matching path IDs.

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